1: Federal W-5 (no date) 1986
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White Bluff

HUGE, MOSS-HUNG OAKS FORM A CANOPY AND CAST filigreed shadows upon the White Bluff Road, which passes directly through the quiet Negro community of White Bluff, eight miles southeast of Savannah.

Winding roads turn from the main highway and terminate in the various sections which form the settlement and which are known as Nicholsonboro, Rose Dhu, Twin Hill, and Cedar Grove. The sections east of the White Bluff Road are on the Vernon River. It is here that many of the inhabitants make their living by catching crab and fish which they sell in the city markets. West of the highway the narrow roads lead through thickly wooded areas of great beauty. Along these roads families have cleared small tracts and built their homes, reserving garden space for flowers and vegetables. In the summer wild crepe myrtle trees, with blossoms as luscious a red as the heart of the watermelon, contrast colorfully with the bright blue paint on the doors and trimmings of some of the houses.

The White Bluff Road, which for two miles forms the main street of the community, passes the houses of other residents set well back from the road. Most of them are small and unpretentious but well kept. At intervals of perhaps half a mile are three rural grocery stores; farther along is a whitewashed church with red and blue glass windows, and at the farthest extremity of the settlement is a similar but larger church.

The inhabitants, of which there are approximately four

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hundred, are deeply religious and lay great stress on being "Christian people." Many of the older inhabitants were formerly slaves on a large plantation on St. Catherines Island. After the War between the States many of these Negroes moved to White Bluff, built their homes, reared their families, and have lived to see two generations reach maturity. With all their fervent Christian doctrines the old people have an unwavering faith in many of the beliefs taught them by their grandparents. A few remember their ancestors who were brought from Africa on slave ships.

The younger group seem carefree as they perform their tasks in the cool part of the morning. It is not unusual to see several young men lying on a shady porch resting or happily engaged in a card game as early as ten o'clock on a summer morning. These young people have little faith in the practices of their elders, but they believe profoundly in the power of certain charms to affect luck and love.[8]

Having heard that Sophie Davis was one of the oldest persons in the community, we visited her and found her cordial in her reception. Sophie * does not know her exact age, but was eight at the time of the war. She is very short and very stout with gray hair and a very large smiling face. The day we saw her she wore a cotton print dress with gray predominating. Her sparkling eyes expressed her interest in current happenings of the community, and when she laughed, her eyes became mere slits and her shoulders shook.

Indicating a small bush growing beside the doorway of her little cabin, Sophie told us, "Some uh duh folks heah sho belieb in some queah tings. Yuh see dis lill bush—it call Cherokee an mos uh dull folks yuh plants it at duh doe. It bring um good luck.[34c] Lot uh medicine an cuos is made frum udduh roots and herbs an some uh duh folks uses um wen dey's sick." [48]

We inquired as to the kind of herbs used.

* *Sophie Davis, White Bluff.*

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Sandfly

SANDFLY, ABOUT NINE MILES SOUTHEAST OF SAVANnah, is a scattered Negro community spreading through the hot pine barrens to the Isle of Hope. There is nothing unusual or outstanding about the sleepy little settlement; its three hundred inhabitants appear to lead a placid, uneventful existence.

Many of the houses are situated on a side road which leads to the Isle of Hope. Modern conveniences are lacking, but the nondescript dwellings are brightened by flower gardens in the front yards, while small truck gardens occupy the space to the rear and sides. The more substantial houses of the more prosperous citizens are set deep in the wooded sections and are reached by means of narrow winding paths bordered with giant moss-hung oak trees.

Usually life in Sandfly flows along pleasantly and without serious interruption. Even in the morning men and women sit around on porches or in yards, sometimes talking, sometimes dozing in the sun. The more industrious are at work in the gardens or may be seen through doors busily occupied in washing or ironing clothes. Many of the men are employed as fishermen or day laborers, and the women who work out are generally engaged as house servants in homes at near-by Isle of Hope.

At first residents of the community were reluctant to talk about their superstitions and beliefs and their knowledge of conjure. Their customary response when first approached was a laconic, "No, ma'am, I ain got no fait in sech tings as

1: Federal W-5 (no date) 1986
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Grimball's Point

GRIMBALL'S POINT, LYING AT THE NORTHWESTERN end of the Isle of Hope on the marshes and creeks that run from the wide Skidaway River, is one of the characteristic spots of Savannah's rural landscape. The lowland spreads grassy flats against the horizon; the squawks of marsh hen rise from the long reeds on Grimball's Creek; all the year round a familiar sight is the Negro fisherman sitting patiently in his small bateau or trudging with his plump catch up an old oak-shaded shell road.

A few white residents maintain comfortable summer homes at Grimball's Point, but the settlers scattered on the southern part of the point are Negroes, former slaves and descendants of slaves who once worked the great plantations on the Isle of Hope and other near-by islands. Some of the inhabitants are employed on Grimball's Point hunting preserve, while others are farmers or fishermen. Their abodes are frame bungalows with front porches or little shacks of one or two rooms, but most of the dwellings are surrounded by sun-dappled yards, fenced with boards or chicken wire. Each has its backyard pump as there is no running water.

Of the ten Negro families on the point, young and old believe in signs and auguries. "Catfish Tom" William, Habersham Gibson, and Solomon Gibson professed to know that "some signs sho do wuk." Thomas Tuten, who has spent his fifty-eight years on the island, warned us that "yuh sho has tuh watch people cuz dey kin do yuh." Aging Aunt Cinda Smith, employed on the old Wiley place, is given the respect

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
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Demography

175 [103] The Sea Islands were the homes of Indians before the Europeans and Africans came to America, and thus the region is characterized by names like Wadmalaw, Sampit, Santee, Yamassee, Pee Dee, Winyah, Waccamaw, and Yacamaw. After the forced migration in the early 1700s of the Yamassee and other Indians, the coastal islands became the home of African slaves, a few white planters, and ex-slaves and their free descendants.[10] Not many whites or Europeans inhabited the islands during the slave trade, and in some places white permanent residents are still rare.[11] Federal census figures for the coastal areas have until very recently shown high concentrations of African and African-American populations. For example, 1830 figures revealed an overwhelmingly black population. The Georgetown district of South Carolina at that time contained 1,940 whites and 18,000 blacks. A grand jury presentment held during the fall term of 1835 complained that the black-to-white ratio in Georgetown was becoming unwieldy and insisted that something had to be done. Noting that 10 masters of 1,700 slaves were permanently absent from their property, the jury went on to object that there were only 40 proprietors to oversee a black population of 15,000 on the Tide Swamp plantation.[12] On many of the islands the only white persons present were the owners, and in many cases there was no overseer.[13]

175 162 567 175 569 In 1798 the Georgia Constitution prohibited direct slave importation from Africa, and the Constitution of the United States made the slave trade illegal after 1808. Nevertheless, the navigable ocean recesses of the islands and the turbulent rivers leading miles into the interior facilitated the landing of slaves brought directly from Africa. Slave trading thus continued to flourish in the coastal region as late as 1858, when the slave ship *Wanderer* brought new slaves to the Georgia coast. By this time inland parts of the United States were sufficiently supplied with generations of native-born African-Americans, so the coastal cities and the Sea Islands absorbed the newly arrived African population. The continued addition of Africans to communities with few, if any, Europeans and an already dense African population made possible the reinforcement and perpetuation of African traditions in these areas.[14] [178]

175 162 By 1880 the federal census revealed that Charleston County con-

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
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tained 30,922 whites and 71,868 blacks. By 1940 the Sea Island communities still maintained a majority black population. The 1940 census for Johns Island, South Carolina, revealed that of the 3,534 residents of the island, 2,623 were black. On Wadmalaw Island, where many of the data for this study were collected, only 251 of the 1,607 inhabitants in 1940 were white. The black-to-white ratio of Charleston County and the surrounding Sea Islands remained fairly stable until the late 1930s and the 1940s. The BCD Council of Governments records that between 1930 and 1970 Charleston County witnessed a 145% population increase, with further increments of approximately 4,200 persons per year between 1970 and 1978. This population growth is largely attributed to the increasing industrialization and commercialization brought by the new bridges connecting many of the islands to the coast. Most of the immigration since 1930 has been by whites. The 1970 census indicated that blacks constituted only 31.4 percent of the population of Charleston County, compared to more than 50 percent in 1930.[15]

While this distribution does reflect a major change in racial composition, especially in the Charleston County area during the last 100 or more years, the demographic picture of the Sea Islands is somewhat obscured by the distribution of the new arrivals. Only a few of the Sea Islands have experienced major changes in population and industrialization, and these are not among the most remote and economically distressed areas. Unemployment and population lag seem to be related to remoteness: islands with adequate bridges and paved roadways that provide excellent access to and from the Charleston area, like James and Johns in South Carolina, are undergoing significant population growth, as is shown in Table 2.

The population growth for the Johns Island Division is due to major commercialization and to developmental pressures from the exclusive resort construction still occurring on Kiawah and Seabrook Islands, which are a part of the division (see Appendix 4).[A] James Island, situated just over the bridge from Charleston, is highly urbanized and is one of the major arteries to the Folly Beach area. The new inhabitants in both island divisions, as elsewhere, are primarily white. Whereas blacks constituted approximately 80 percent of the total population of the Johns Island township in 1940, only 41 percent of the island residents were black in 1970, and that ratio remained relatively stable through 1980.[16]

As the data in Table 2 indicate, Wadmalaw and Edisto, com-

A, [For Appendix 4, see Category 423, pp. 165-168--Analyst]

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
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Table 2. Racial Breakdowns for Five of the Carolina Sea Islands

Year	Population	Edisto	James	Johns	Wadmalaw	St. Helena
1930	Total	1,948	3,058	3,264	2,054	4,626
	Black	1,693	2,419	2,826	1,813	4,458
1940	Total	1,955	3,913	3,534	1,858	4,266
	Black	1,717	2,709	2,633	1,607	3,961
1960	Total	1,589	13,872	6,252	2,326	6,048
	Black	1,306	4,168	3,260	1,980	4,994
1970	Total	1,374	18,969	7,530	2,024	5,718
	Black	1,115	5,217	3,104	1,719	4,278
1980	Total	1,345	27,719	9,296	2,440	8,134
	Black	1,124	6,173	3,975	1,935	4,934

Source: U.S. censuses of population.

paratively remote, do not show any significant population changes. In the late 1970s Edisto Island had only 19 persons per square mile dispersed over a 72.6-square-mile land area. The 1980 census revealed a population of 1,345 persons—another slight decrease. Edisto's population remains predominantly black (84 percent). Its slow growth is attributed to the lack of incorporated areas, of major manufacturers, and of essential services such as water and sewer.[17]

Wadmalaw Island, situated between Johns and Edisto, is rural in nature and like Edisto has exhibited very little in- or out-migration. In 1970, 85 percent of the people were black, and this figure had dropped only to 79 percent in 1980. Even though 80 percent of the housing is occupied by owners, Wadmalaw is ranked second in the region in economic distress. It has no water or sewer services, and its only industry is Metal Trades, which provides services primarily for ship repair. Most of the inhabitants are laborers, farmers, and fishermen, though there are an increasing number of professional persons who have returned home to the island to work as doctors, lawyers, teachers, and so on.[18]

The addition of more whites is not precipitating an erosion of the traditional social and racial composition of most of the Sea Island communities. They remain isolated, with predominantly black populations. Only the most readily accessible islands, particularly James,

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
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surrounding area see Nichols, "Linguistic Change in Gullah"; and Charles Joyner, *Down by the Riverside: A South Carolina Slave Community* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984).

4. BCD Council of Governments, *Regional Housing Market Analysis*, 1979, p. 2.

5. Waccamaw Regional Planning and Development Council, *Waccamaw Regional Housing Element*, 1977, p. 8.

6. BCD, *Regional Housing Market Analysis*, p. 21.

7. The residents of Sandy Island have requested a bridge from the local government, but at this writing none is expected in the near future. At present all building materials, appliances, vehicles, and the like must be brought from the mainland by barge. And though residents enjoy the seclusion during the spring and summer, they complain—the children particularly—about being ferried across the river during the freezing rains that frequent the Carolina coast in winter.

8. For a discussion of the demographic characteristics of the Sea Island area see Elizabeth Donnan, *Documents Illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade to America*, vol. 4 (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1930); Turner, *Africanisms in the Gullah Dialect;* Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969); and Peter H. Wood, *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1690 through the Stone Rebellion* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974).

9. Many hags, ghosts, and spirits are thought to haunt these highways, and some islanders fear them much more than the alligators, wolves, rattlesnakes, and other creatures which may prowl along the swamp roads at night.

10. Merrill G. Christophersen, *Biography of an Island* (Fennimore, Wis.: Westburg Assoc., 1976).

11. Sandy Island, in Georgetown County, is inhabited entirely by African-Americans. However, some Sea Islands just north of Charleston and closer to the coast, such as Pawleys, Sullivans, and the Isle of Palms, are peopled primarily by whites.

12. Marina Wikramanayake, *A World in Shadow: The Free Black in Antebellum South Carolina* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1973), pp. 158–59.

13. Jackson, Slaughter, and Blake, "The Sea Islands as a Cultural Resource," p. 33.

14. Frederic Bancroft, *Slave Trading in the Old South* (Baltimore: J. J. Furst Co., 1931), pp. 359–60. For further discussion of the slave trade in the Sea Island area see Georgia Writers Project, *Drums and Shadows* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1940; reprint, Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1973) p. xvii; Wood, *Black Majority;* and Joyner, *Down by the Riverside*.

15. BCD, *Regional Housing Market Analysis*, p. 19.

16. BCD, *Report on Economically Less Developed Areas*, p. 14.

17. Ibid., p. 13.

18. Ibid., p. 18.

19. June Manning Thomas, "The Impact of Corporate Tourism on Gullah Blacks: Notes on Issues of Employment," *Phylon* 41, no. 1 (Spring 1980): 4, 5.

20. BCD, *Report on Economically Less Developed Areas*, pp. 13, 17.

21. Thomas, "Impact of Corporate Tourism," p. 6.

22. Quoted in Mason Crum, *Gullah: Negro Life in the Carolina Sea Islands* (Du-

3: Creel H-4 (no date) 1988
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maintained by slaves' industry while the masters "live in the towns in opulency and ease" riding out to the "farms" once in a fortnight "as any urgent occasion requires, sometimes taking their ladies with them and children in chairs so that there is not the appearance of . . . business."[39]

The first census return for the new nation reported a population of 18,753 in Beaufort District (St. Helena, St. Luke, and Prince William Parishes). Of this number, 14,236 were slaves and 153 were free blacks. The resort town of Beaufort contained about thirty houses, and the majority of the population was scattered over the islands and on remote mainland plantations. Timothy Ford, a Northerner whose sister married into the DeSaussure family of South Carolina visited the region during that time. He commented on the absenteeism, the superfluity of servants, and the idleness of Southerners who called themselves planters, "yet know little about the process and art of planting . . . all is committed to overseers and drivers." Of religious life, Ford noted that the Episcopalian Church was the "preeminent and fashionable mode of worship," but also observed that:

> . . . the spirit had not lately visited this parish; the shattered and forlorn condition of this church gave but too much room to question their zeal; and the few that attended it (about fifty whites) to doubt the ardor of their devotion.[40]

A St. Helena planter's wife, Abigail Capers, wrote a friend in 1791 that there were about seventy families on the Island, forty of whom were eminent planters "with strong attachments to each other." The only church, she wrote, was a tiny Episcopal chapel of ease. Sundays were for the most part not spent in church but among "genteel company" on various plantations and engaged in a variety of "amusements." It was a simple but elegant life where "nothing is so much coveted as the pleasure of possessing many slaves . . . happiness is confined within the narrow limits of a plantation with a great many slaves."[41]

In the early nineteenth century Baptist churches were still tiny unpretentious houses of worship with no slave galleries, although personal servants did attend services. White memberships were so small that no specific seating arrangements were needed—blacks occupied the back of the churches and whites sat in the front. Furthermore, even though revivals were conducted in the Beaufort area in the early 1800s, church rolls indicate no significant gain in black membership. Not until 1817 did the Beaufort Baptist Church have its first extension to admit galleries

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After Fuller left for Baltimore in 1847, attempts to bring slaves into Sea Island churches were not persued with the same enthusiasm. But in 1853, through efforts of the Savannah River Baptist Association missionary and an energetic new pastor at Beaufort Church named I.M.C. Beaker, Gullahs again became a focal point of concern. During the last seven antebellum years, slave baptisms in the Beaufort River again became frequent. A record was set in 1857 when 220 slaves received into the Church "were all on Sunday morning . . . Baptized by our Pastor . . . in 1 hour and 45 minutes and in the presence of a very large number of spectators." The total number of slaves baptized for that year was also a record—556.[27]

The first phase of Baptist efforts to Christianize slaves, from 1830 to 1845, roughly corresponds to a period of growth in Sea Island churches and, most spectacularly, the Beaufort Church. In 1833, Beaufort District had a slave population of around 30,861. For that year the nine largest Beaufort District Baptist congregations reported a total membership of around 4,419. That was over two and one-half times the total membership of the remaining twenty-eight Baptist churches in the Savannah River Association (whose combined memberships was only 1,666). We cannot be certain about the number of slaves these figures represent, since racial designations were not yet in use. But the majority of these church members were slaves, a hypothesis supported by membership returns of later years for which there are racial designations.[28]

By 1845, when the Southern Baptist Convention was organized, the largest Beaufort District Baptist churches at Beaufort, St. Helena, May River and Hilton Head for instance, reported a total membership of around 5,914. Most of this increase is attributable to slave baptisms and over half of those to Beaufort Church. Total membership for all forty-three churches within the Association was about 8,529. This trend indicates that the most active area of religious instruction was in the Sea Islands. St. Helena Parish, with a slave population of 6,740 in 1845, had two Baptist churches. While St. Helena's Brick Baptist Church was accessible to the several thousand slaves living there, Beaufort Church drew its membership for a forty-mile radius that included six Sea Islands and parts of the mainland. The adult slave population in Beaufort District was around 22,000 in 1840, out of a total slave population of 29,682.[29] Thus approximately one in every five slaves in Beaufort District was a Baptist church member.

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APPENDIX C

Baptist Churches

TABLE C.1

State of the Churches within the Savannah River Baptist Association in 1833

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Churches	*Constituted*	*Number Baptized*	*Membership*
* 1 Euhaw	1745	43	841
2 Beach Branch	1759	65	132
3 Healing Springs	1772	7	143
* 4 Pipe Creek	1776	38	287
5 Treadaway	1776	6	66
6 Columbia	1780	2	115
* 7 Black Swamp	1786	11	294
8 Great Saltcatcher	1793	59	127
9 Barnwell	1803	13	126
10 Springtown	1803	66	244
*11 Beaufort	1804	239	1,292
12 Rosemary	1804	11	114
13 Willow Swamp	1805	0	34
14 Union	1805	7	220
15 Little Saltcatcher	1807	21	50
*16 St. Helena	1809	138	536
*17 May River	1811	36	621
18 Beulah	1811	0	20
*19 Prince Williams	1813	70	140
20 Steep Bottom	1814	3	44
21 Cypress Creek	1814	41	144
22 Double Ponds	1825	1	58
23 Philadelphia	1827	9	75
24 Kirkland	1827	12	162
25 Black Creek	1827	69	111
26 M't Pleasant	1828	4	38

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TABLE C.1 *(continued)*

State of the Churches within the Savannah River Baptist Association in 1833

Churches	*Constituted*	*Number Baptized*	*Membership*
27 3 Mile Creek	1829	29	64
28 Matlock	1830	0	33
29 Bethesda	1830	8	30
30 Steel Creek	1830	23	71
31 Joico's Branch	1831	3	30
32 Ebenezer	1831	3	21
33 Coosawatchie	1832	34	196
34 Beach Island	1832	0	38
*35 Hilton Head	1832	86	212
36 Sardia	1833	14	33
37 Pleasant Prospect	1833	0	43
Total		471	6,805

*Beaufort District churches with large memberships and which are on or near the Sea Islands.
Source: Minutes of the Savannah River Baptist Association, November 23, 1833, 11, BC.

TABLE C.2

State of the Churches within the Savannah River Baptist Association in 1842

Churches	*Number Baptized*	*Membership*	*By Whom Supplied*
*Euhaw	. . . No Report . . .		W. A. Lawton
Beach Branch	0	71	E. Estes
Healing Springs	1	104	D. Peeples
*Pipe Creek	12	131	I. Nicholes
Treadaway	1	31	H. D. Duncan
Columbia	17	141	L. M. Brown
*Black Swamp	13	278	George Kempton
Great Saltcatcher	18	130	James Fant
Barnwell	2	140	D. Peeples, M. Shoares
Springtown	0	183	L. B. Brown
*Beaufort	152	1,947	R. Fuller
Rosemary	0	111	D. Peeples
Union	8	240	H. Z. Ardis
Little Saltcatcher	0	70	George Walker
*St. Helena	61	762	W. Hall
*May River	30	888	W. A. Lawton
*Prince Williams	. . . No Report . . .		L. G. Bowers

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Churches	*Number Baptized*	*Membership*	*By Whom Supplied*
Deep Bottom	1	33	C. J. Robert
Cypress Creek	0	37	I. Nix
Philadelphia	4	87	L. M. Brown
Smyrna	3	207	M. Shoares
Black Creek	. . .	No Report . . .	(No Pastor)
Mount Pleasant	. . .	No Report . . .	(No Pastor)
St. John's	1	3	George Walker
Matlock	0	9	(No Pastor)
Bethesda	0	57	William Baxley
Steel Creek	19	131	H. Z. Ardis
Joico's Branch	25	73	H. D. Duncan
*Coosawhatchie	. . .	No Report . . .	H. D. Duncan
Beach Island	5	189	H. Z. Ardis
Friendship	0	66	(No Pastor)
*Hilton Head	. . .	No Report . . .	(No Pastor)
Sardia	9	34	John Youmans
Pleasant Prospect	. . .	No Report . . .	(No Pastor)
Sandy Run	11	61	J. Fant
Gent's Branch	9	32	(No Pastor)
Beaver Dam	1	43	John Youmans
M't Temperance	. . .	No Report . . .	(No Pastor)
Long Beach	. . .	No Report . . .	J. Munch
Beulah	14	51	J. Fant
Union, Colleton	0	20	W. Price, B. Ferguson
Mount Aaron	2	33	Joseph A. Lawton
Three Lower Runs	2	39	Joseph A. Lawton
Doctor's Creek, Colleton	0	76	(No Pastor)
Total	421	6,508	

*Beaufort District churches with large memberships and which are on or near Sea Islands.
Source: Minutes of the Savannah River Baptist Association, November 26, 1842, 16, BC.

TABLE C.3

State of the Churches within the Savannah River Baptist Association in 1851

Churches	*Baptized*	*Black Members*	*White Members*	*Total*
*Euhaw	8	442	32	474
Beach Branch	12	70	64	140
Healing Springs	0	23	31	54
*Pipe Creek	20	No Breakdown		179
Columbia	0	No Breakdown		146

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TABLE C.3 *(continued)*

State of the Churches within the Savannah River Baptist Association in 1851

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Churches	*Baptized*	*Black Members*	*White Members*	*Total*
*Black Swamp	10	259	64	323
Great Saltcatcher	0	43	106	149
Barnwell	1	71	3	105
Springtown	8	73	107	180
*Beaufort	32	2,477	196	2,673
Rosemary	3	20	98	118
Union	6	148	39	187
Little Saltcatcher	4	17	162	179
*St. Helena	16	866	34	900
*May River	25	510	30	540
Steep Bottom	9	54	38	92
Cypress Creek	0	14	46	60
Philadelphia	9	120	10	130
Smyrna	7	223	43	266
St. John's	0	6	30	36
Matlock	20	26	70	96
Bethesda	9	11	91	102
Steel Creek	2	64	11	75
Joico's Branch	0	1	57	58
*Coosawhatchie	29	258	38	296
Beach Island	19	22	38	60
Friendship	0	No Breakdown		90
*Hilton Head	1	106	2	108
Black Creek, Colleton	0	No Breakdown		104
Pleasant Prospect	5	No Breakdown		57
Sandy Run	17	44	56	100
Gent's Branch	0	7	38	45
Beaver Dam	0	1	40	41
Long Beach	3	12	75	87
Union, Colleton	0	No Breakdown		25
Mount Aaron	0	3	37	40
Lower Three Runs	1	No Breakdown		38
Doctor's Creek, Colleton	8	No Breakdown		47
Round O	0	No Breakdown		48
Great Swamp	0	15	18	33
Blackville	0	15	55	70
Sand Hill	10	No Breakdown		35
Bedon's	0	No Breakdown		44
Peniel	12	No Breakdown		66
Mount Olive	2	6	17	23

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Churches	*Baptized*	*Black Members*	*White Members*	*Total*
Cypress Chapel	0	0	22	22
Bethel	0	No Breakdown		12
Beulah	0	25	7	32
Total	308	6,052	1,805	9,282

[1] Beaufort District churches with large memberships and which are on or near the Sea Islands. These churches claimed 4,918 members out of a total black membership return of 6,052. Most of the 4,918 blacks were members of the Sea Island congregations at Beaufort, St. Helena, May River, and Hilton Head.

Source: Minutes of the Savannah River Baptist Association, November 22, 1851, 20, BC.

4: Carawan & Carawan B,Z-5 (1959-1988) 1989
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South Carolina
Johns Island

Mrs. Bernice Robinson

ALL THIS IS AN OUTGROWTH OF PEOPLE FEELING EMPOWERED

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87
185

On Johns Island you see the results now really, the aggressiveness of the people and the confidence they had in moving forward, when you look at the sea island clinic, and you look at the senior citizen center and the nursing home and the housing project for senior citizens. All this is an outgrowth of people feeling empowered by being able to read and write and understanding how to go about pressing for things like that. They became very active in the PTA and things that they didn't bother with before because they couldn't read or they couldn't understand what was going down. Before they had a high school on the island, a lot of people who had relatives over here in the city would send the children over here to go to school, to try to get an education. And they had to do that for a long time before they got the high school.

But all these things that finally came about, came about from these same people that learned how to read and write and fight for their kids to get a decent education right in their own home rather than having to cross the bridge to come into town to get an education.

Mrs. Ethel Grimball

WE'RE GOING TO VOTE FOR THE CANDIDATES WE WANT

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People are still voting today. Blacks now rule Wadmalaw Island for the Democratic party. Before this, the white people in the Democratic party brought a slate in and then they immediately passed that slate. My father and others said, "We're not going to go along with a slate that they bring in. We're going to vote for the candidates we want." And that's how we changed that situation on Wadmalaw Island. After the voter registration drives, the people got more interested in the importance of voting. Therefore, we got a lot of people on the books. Eighty-five percent of the population on Wadmalaw is black. Most of the whites left the Democratic party when the blacks got control of it. Before that the whites ruled everything on Wadmalaw Island. It was the tradition.

175 French Huguenot families were in their number and were allowed to use the Book of Common Prayer in a French version (Rogers, 1970:20). The early landowners were usually sons of English and French planters in the Charleston area, trying their luck in the northern frontier. To the west of Georgetown proper, in what is now Williamsburg County, townships were established by Scots-Irish and Welsh settlers. Scots were frequently merchants and officeholders in the district. From such a mixture, it is safe to assume that it was not always the standard English dialect of southern England which was spoken by the European landowners and their overseers to the West African slaves. The McDavids (1951) and others have noted the preservation of seventeenth century English dialect forms in isolated Gullah-speaking areas.

175 Very early in the history of the Georgetown district, 562 Africans outnumbered Europeans. Federal census figures of (162) 1830 indicate that 1,940 white persons and 18,000 persons of color (both slave and free) resided in the district (Wikramanayake, 1973). An important factor in the low numbers of Europeans was their susceptibility to the malaria-bearing mosquito which thrived in the fresh-water swamplands. During the summer months and fall, which constituted the malaria season, the landowners moved to homes on the ocean or further inland. West Africans, on the other hand, had a genetic tolerance for the malaria parasite. A Grand Jury Presentment in Georgetown for the fall term of 1835 reported

484 be a one-day affair by boat. Electricity did not become
365 available in some rural areas until the paving of a coastal
highway in 1936. In this isolated county the population re-
• 162 mained primarily of West African descent until the most recent
census. Of a total population of 33,500 in 1970, Georgetown
County had slightly more than fifty-one percent white resi-
dents--the first time that whites had outnumbered blacks
since the eighteenth century (Georgetown County Development
Plan, 1972; Rogers, 1970).

2.3 A Closed Community in Georgetown County

131 In more isolated portions of the county, blacks still
162 outnumber whites. One such area is a river island of approxi-
mately fifty square miles, whose two hundred permanent resi-
121 dents are black. The speech used by inhabitants of this
island, together with that of selected speakers in adjacent
mainland communities, is the focus of the present study.

505 In important senses, this island constitutes a closed
community. The vast majority of trips made off the island
are for jobs, school attendance, or to secure supplies. Few
people come onto the island without an express invitation
from some island resident, because of the difficulty of ac-
cess. The boat landing is unmarked and must be known to the
would-be visitor, and the distance between the mainland
landing and the isalnd is a two-mile boat trip which can be
hazardous for the unskilled boat driver, and even for the
skilled in bad weather.

6: Smith I,Y-5 (no date) 1989
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
South Carolina

000 the largest of the Sea Islands.

POPULATION DISTRIBUTION[1]

•162 A total of 44,340 people live on the five Sea Islands. Approximately 48% of this population is Black. Nearly 65% of the White Sea Islanders reside on James, the most densely populated island. James is the only island on which Whites are the clear cut majority. This case is increasingly reversed as distance from the mainland increases.

The detailed population description for each island is as follows:

James Island's total population is 24,197. There are 11,880 males and 12,317 female residents. Five thousand and twenty-eight of James Island's residents are Black. The median age of people on James Island is 23.9 years. Over 42% of the population is under eighteen years old and 4.4% sixty-five years old and over.

Seven thousand five hundred and thirty people live on Johns Island. Over four thousand of these residents are White. About 41% of this population is Black. The median age on the island is 20.7 years, 5.4% are 65 years and over. Children under eighteen years old are 45% of the total population.

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[1]U.S., Department of Commerce Bureau of the Census, 1970 Census of Population, General Population Characteristics, South Carolina (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1971).

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•162 Wadmalaw has 2,024 people. There are 963 males and 1,061 females. The median age is 19.6 years. Forty-seven point three percent are under eighteen years and 6.8% of the island's people are 65 years old and over. Over 90% of Wadmalaw's population is Black.

Yonges (St. Pauls) Island has 9,235 residents; 6,314 of this total are Black. The median age is 19.9 years. Forty-six point five per cent of the population is under eighteen years and 6.7% 65 years old and older.

Edisto has 1,374 residents. There are 672 males and 702 females. The median age is 19.7 years. Nine per cent of this community is 65 years and over, 46.1% are under eighteen years old. One thousand one hundred and fifteen of Edisto's population is Black.

BLACK SEA ISLAND FAMILIES

361 Black islanders generally live on the inner acreage of the islands. This pattern exists and has been maintained for a number of reasons: (a) a strong agricultural history in which farmers built homes on or close to their planting acreage, (b) long term economic deprivation where Blacks could not afford new homes which in part contributed to (c) the generational building habit of constructing newer dwellings either close to or as extensions of existing houses.

[175] With the exception of (imported) Black city and military

000 of Blacks on the Sea Islands.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SEA ISLANDERS BLACK WORK FORCE

121 464 The following 1970 census figures are for the rural non-farm population of Charleston county and as such can only serve as an indirect indicator of the characteristics of the Black Sea Island labor force. These figures will be followed for comparison with those generated by a more specific survey of the islanders sponsored by the United Methodist Church.

464 •162 The total number of persons in the rural labor force is 12,485. This work force is comprised of 8,014 males and 4,606 females. Jobs in different areas of manufacturing engaged the highest number of workers (2,319). The wholesale-retail trades employed 2,271 workers. The personal service industry which includes private household workers was the next big employer (1,970). Five hundred and eleven workers were employed in the agricultural industry.

434 While the median annual income of rural families was $6,895, 28.4% of this population had incomes below the poverty line. The income deficit of this segment was $2,152. There were 2,390 families with these incomes under poverty level. Female head of households had a median income of $3,816. This 1,271 member female work force had

434 592 464

8: Smith Q-4,5 (no date) 1926
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
South Carolina

533 belong in the plantation tradition. They have studied the
178 spirituals long and carefully at first hand, have learned
814 them orally from groups of Negro plantation singers, and sing them seriously, feelingly, and sympathetically. Students of Negro music who know the facts are unanimous in the opinion that their rendition is accurate, dignified, and artistic."

533 The second influence came from a movement to get the
178 Negroes themselves to see the racial importance and native
517 worth of the spirituals and hence to continue to sing them, instead of discarding them as something vaguely to be ashamed of, in favor of printed collections of the white race.

(871) This influence has been particularly effective on St. Helena Island, through the instrumentality of the Penn Normal, Industrial and Agricultural School, which has exerted an extensive influence on the large Negro population of that island." In regard to the spirituals, the most important result, next to the continued singing of the spirituals by the island Negroes, is the recent publication of the words and music of 113 of the finest low-country spirituals."

533 This is the work of N. G. J. Ballanta, himself a Negro from Sierra Leone. Possessing as he does both musical scholarship and a native African background, he is unusu-

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(177) "Following are two interesting opinions on the subject of the white people's singing of spirituals. The latter opinion is the more accurate: "Carl Van Vechten writing in *Vanity Fair* about these songs declared it as his opinion that white singers cannot sing them, and that women, with few exceptions, should not attempt to sing them at all. . . . . I agree that white singers are, naturally, prone to go to either of two extremes: to attempt to render a Spiritual as though it were a Brahm's song, or to assume a 'Negro unctuousness' that is obviously false, and painfully so. I think white singers, concert singers, *can* sing Spirituals—if they *feel* them." Johnson, *The Book of American Negro Spirituals*, pp. 23, 29.

Compare the remark of a Negro woman quoted by Miss McKim (*Slave Songs of the United States*, XXIII) concerning how a spiritual should be sung: "It can't be sung widout *a full heart and a troubled sperrit*."

(162) "St. Helena has a population of approximately 6,000 Negroes and 60 white people. The Penn School, founded during the War Between the States, was the first school for Negroes in the South supported by Northern funds. It has been brought to a high degree of efficiency by Miss Rossa B. Cooley, who went there in 1906. It dominates the island settlement and has had a tremendous influence upon it, so much so that the St. Helena Negroes are considerably above their racial average in most ways.

"*St. Helena Island Spirituals*, G. Schirmer, Inc., 1925.

9: Parrish B-4,5 (ca.1916-1941) 1942
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
Georgia
St. Simon's Island

long canoe, hollowed out of the trunk of a single cypress and rowed by six negroes, who were singing loudly and keeping time to the stroke of their oars." He went on to say: "For many a mile we saw no habitations, and the solitude was profound; but our black oarsmen made the woods echo to their song. One of them taking the lead, first improvised a verse, paying compliments to his master's family, and to a celebrated black beauty of the neighborhood, who was compared to the 'red bird.' The other five then joined in the chorus, always repeating the same words. Occasionally they struck up a hymn, in which the most sacred subjects were handled with strange familiarity, and which, though nothing irreverent was meant, sounded oddly to our ears, and, when following a love ditty, almost profane."

Lyell's account of his canoe trip from Hopeton to visit Mr. Couper's summer residence on St. Simon's Island, fifteen miles distant, is of interest for several reasons. In describing the Negro houses on Butler Island, where the party landed on their way, he tells us they "were neat, and whitewashed, all floored with wood, each with an apartment called the hall, two sleeping rooms, and a loft for the children" —which is contrary to what Fanny Kemble had written about the selfsame houses a few years earlier. He also mentioned seeing ricks of rice raised on props five feet high, to protect them from the sea, which, during hurricanes, has been known to rise five or six feet. His observations on the mental development of the slaves are particularly significant: "It is evident that on these rice farms, where the negroes associate with scarcely any whites, except the overseer and his family, and have but little intercourse with the slaves of other estates, they must remain far more stationary than where, as in a large part of Georgia, they are about equal in number to the whites, or even form a minority. . . . In Glynn County, where we are now residing, there are no less than four thousand negroes to seven hundred whites,[34] whereas in Georgia generally there are only 281,000 in a population of 691,000 or more whites than colored people."

I give these figures because they explain why more distinctive slave songs can be found in the rice swamps and cotton plantations of the adjoining sea islands than in the Piedmont section where Anglo-Saxon influence has always predominated. In all probability we have the malaria mosquito and the absentee landlords to thank for this. In Africa the black race had developed an immunity to malaria—which they

[34] About the same ratio as when I first went to St. Simon's. Charles Spalding Wylly states that in 1820 almost every acre of arable land on St. Simon's was under cultivation. There were fourteen plantations and a slave population of about 1200.

11: Johnson H-4,5 (no date) 1930
(1525-ca. 1880)
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
South Carolina
St. Helena Island

The proportion of whites to blacks remained practically the same during these three decades, the whites being 15.8 per cent of the total population in 1840 and 16.8 per cent in 1860.

Even with such a small percentage of whites in the population, there were, as Mrs. Capers suggests in 1791, social classes among the whites. There were three general classes with various shadings of social differentiation between them: the "genteel," the middle class, and the poor. Some of the "eminent planters," of whom Mrs. Capers spoke, belonged to the gentry. They were the ones whose sea-island cotton sold at the top prices. They educated their sons in England in the days before the Revolution and afterward in South Carolina or in the North. They spent the hot summer months at a health resort; they had their hunting clubs and their literary societies. They entertained on their plantations and at Beaufort and Charleston.

The middle class was composed chiefly of the overseers and trades people, although no strict line was drawn between classes. It sometimes happened that an overseer was himself a planter and a member of the gentry. Even on St. Helena Island there were storekeepers who sold small supplies to the planters and traded with the slaves. The agent for the Federal Government found a German storekeeper on the Island in 1861 who had taken considerable quantities of cotton in payment of debts which he claimed some of the planters had allowed to accumulate.[18]

It has often been claimed that St. Helena's Parish con-

[18] MS in Port Royal Correspondence.